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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR MARCH 30, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for March 30, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

HURRIYET ONLINE (TODAY'S UPDATED NEWS AS OF 3.00 P.M.): Businesses and shops of majority of tradesmen in Diyarbakir stayed closed today, as well. Owners of those shops that stayed open reportedly expressed that they were being threatened to close their businesses. Authorities and people in Diyarbakir reportedly fear that incidents will escalate today. It is also expected that the funerals of three people killed during the demonstrations will be held today. The daily announced the names of the demonstrators killed as, Tar?k Ataykaya (23), Mehmet Is?kg? (19) and Abdullah Duru (8). A group of people waiting outside of the hospital to take possession of their dead have chanted slogans against government. Students of Dicle University boycotted classes and examinations at the university today. Security forces have been intensifying security measures at the main crossroads and public institutions in the province. Gas bombs and additional tires for the armored vehicles have been sent from Ankara to Diyarbakir. Ramazan Er, Deputy Security Director will conduct a trip to Diyarbakir today along with a delegation of specialists. Police extended warnings to the tradesmen, who reportedly did not open their businesses today in Batman to protest incidents in Diyarbakir, to open their businesses. Some people reportedly smashed windows of a post office, a pharmacy and two bank offices. A mob in Batman burned a private financial company's branch office and a hut of State Railways Authority. The group broke into the building of MHP provincial party organization to burn the property inside. The mob dispersed when police and Jandarma officials intervened.

It is reported that some of the demonstrators in the mob have been detained. The online daily reported that tradesmen in Siirt started to open their businesses as of today. Health condition of 16-year-old Muhlis Ete, who was wounded by a shotgun blast during demonstrations in Siirt, is reportedly getting better.

ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM / HURRIYET / CUMHURIYET / RADIKAL / SABAH: According to the reporting of the Ozgur Gundem daily, three people died yesterday during the turmoil in the riots that have been going in the southeastern Diyarbakir province (see press summary 03/29). Names of the dead are Tarik Atakaya (23), Onur Kaya and a third yet-not-identified person. The unidentified person reportedly died when an armored vehicle accidentally hit him. Sabah daily claims that 9-year old Abdullah Duran, who was watching the incidents from the top of their house, died because of the bullets shot in the air. Ten people, including a reported 7-year-old child, have been wounded and hospitalized when police intervened in a demonstration that broke out in

front of the Huzurevleri Police Station yesterday. 16th Armored Mechanized Division blockaded Diyarbakir State Hospital when Atakaya was brought to the hospital. Anti-riot teams took control of the emergency service entrance of the hospital. Cabs and private cars incessantly carried wounded people into the hospital. The clash between demonstrators and security forces was concentrated in all the streets of Baglar quarter in Diyarbakir, as well as in the several other quarters of the province. Police forces, military forces and special teams have conducted quite harsh operations to suppress incidents breaking out, according to Ozgur Gundem. Military tanks and soldiers deployed at the central points of the city have intervened at times with groups of people that continued the unrest. People burned some cars with Molotov cocktails and retaliated with stones and sticks when security forces attempted to disperse people with armored vehicles and gas bombs. Police allegedly smashed windows of the businesses that stayed closed. 16th Armored Mechanized Unit and Fazil Bilge Garrison sent more military units when the incidents started to occur in all the quarters of the city. Reinforcements, including anti-riot teams and special team forces, have also been sent from Batman, Mardin, Urfa and Malatya provinces. Dozens of military vehicles have been deployed in the military units located in the Seyranetepe quarter of the province. A military convoy comprised of nearly 50-car has also been transferred from Silvan Jandarma Battalion to Diyarbakir. Most of the tradesmen did not open their shops and businesses in Siirt province to protest the shooting and wounding of 16-year-old Muhlis Ete allegedly by security forces during the demonstrations held after the funeral of a terrorist. 16-year-old boy is still being kept under intensive care unit. The students reportedly boycotted the schools. A group of young persons in Siirt hurled stones at a coffee house which attempted to stay open yesterday. Anti-riot teams arrived at the scene and intervened. The clash has reportedly been continuing. DTP provincial party organization in Batman will hold a march for peace in Batman to mark the

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killing of 14 guerillas on March 24 in Mus. The march will start at 10 a.m. today. Hundreds of people held demonstrations to protest killing of 14 guerillas in Hacibekir and Yuniplik quarters of Van. People, as they carried flags of "confederalism" and the PKK and as they chanted slogans in support for Ocalan, burned a fire and held a 1-hour march in Van. Security forces intervened in the unauthorized demonstration. A police officer has reportedly been wounded. A group of people also held a half-an-hour demonstration in Sanliurfa which ended peacefully. Cobra helicopters from the Tunceli Jandarma Command allegedly made a show, "as if it was out of joy", reported Ozgur Gundem and Evrensel dailies, in the skies of the Tunceli province. Their flight reportedly lasted half-an-hour, according to daily Ozgur Gundem. DTP, while calling on people in Diyarbakir, Adana, Siirt and Batman to calm down, at the same time called on the government "to take concrete steps in the path to resolving the Kurdish issue." DTP also called on the security forces to remain within the boundaries of rule of law. DTP Co-Chairpersons Aysel Tugluk and Ahmet Turk told people to keep their reactions within the limits of democratic bounds. Co-chairpersons also called on the government to probe the killing of 14 guerillas in military operations. Chairpersons claimed that prosecutors, human rights activists, and civil society members should undertake responsibility in probing the allegations of the use of chemical weapons during the March 24 military operation. Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir made an announcement together with DTP provincial chairperson, civil society representatives and municipality assembly members in front of the Municipality Theater Hall, and said that there was an urgent need for display of a democratic and common sense attitude to address the issue. Oppressive responses concentrating on the security perspective would do no good in resolving the Kurdish issue. According to Baydemir, three people have been killed and many people had been wounded as a result of gunfire in the province, and many wounded people were at the brink of losing their lives. Baydemir further said that many businesses and common public areas in the province have been damaged. Baydemir made a call firstly to the

government, then to the civil society members to approach the issue with common-sense and urgently undertake responsibility to address the problem. Evrensel daily noted that Baydemir also paid visits to the wounded people at the hospitals. Ozgur Gundem daily noted that KNK (Kurdistan National Congress) has made a call to Europe to take action against alleged inhuman war methods and weapons used in the military operation that killed 14 guerillas. Hurriyet daily noted Diyarbakir Governor's Office as announcing the death toll as three. 120 demonstrators and 130 security officers made up a total of 250 people as wounded during the incidents. 200 people have reportedly been arrested.

Deputy national security director and chief of anti-terror branch reportedly went to Diyarbakir yesterday night. People fearing that their property might be damaged during the incidents, did not open their businesses throughout the day despite provincial Deputy Security Director's attempts at the site of businesses to convince tradesmen to open their shops. Deputy Security Director made announcements on police radio to police officers to avoid using firearms unless circumstances oblige them to do so. Hurriyet, Cumhuriyet and Zaman dailies noted that children were placed in the front rows in protests against the police who took intense security measures. Abdulkadir Aksu Minister of Interior reportedly made a written announcement and reminded that demonstrators attacked security forces with stones, sticks and Molotov cocktails as the forces attempted to intervene. Aksu made a call to people and cautioned them to resist incitements that aimed to disrupt the unity and solidarity of the people in the country. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet dailies noted that Murat Avci, DTP provincial chairperson, gave instructions to people in Siirt not to open their businesses after a visit he (Aksu) made to the 16-year-old wounded boy at the hospital. Avci reportedly confirmed his call to people and further added that it was natural for people to display their reactions in a democratic way. Cumhuriyet and Zaman dailies noted that Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir, Deputy Governor Ahmet Aydin, DTP provincial chairperson Ahmet Cengiz and Diyarbakir Bar Association Chairperson Sezgin Tanrikulu met with demonstrators and made a call to people to end their demonstrations. Baydemir reportedly thanked demonstrators for their courage and for demands they have placed. Baydemir further noted that if tension continued, it would do harm to the province and its people. Baydemir said, "17 people have died to date, we do not want anybody to be the 18th." Some of the people among the demonstrators shouted pro-PKK slogans during Baydemir's talk. People reportedly dispersed after Baydemir's talk. Diyarbakir deputies from AKP, CHP and Motherland Party made a joint announcement and made a call to people to show common sense. Zaman daily claimed that DTP has instigated demonstrators into action in the first place, and attempted to defuse tension later.

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ZAMAN / RADIKAL / SABAH / YENIS SAFAK: Bulet Arinc, President of the Turkish Parliament, said that Roj TV committed a crime by instigating people into action through its broadcasts. Namik Tan, Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in a press announcement held yesterday that evidences on how Roj TV broadcasts were inciting people to engage in terrorist activities had already been sent to authorities in countries where Roj TV was granted broadcasting license. "We are now expecting that judicial procedures regarding our concerns be finalized soon," told Tan to journalists.

HURRIYET ONLINE / CUMHURIYET: CHP Leader Deniz Baykal said that they were gravely worried over the recent developments taking place in the southeastern region. Baykal viciously criticized the government and said that while the flags of the terrorist organization were being waved, the mayors were praising Abdullah Ocalan as a hero, PKK members were extorting money at the borders from the smugglers; but the government was unfortunately only watching what had been happening to date. Baykal forewarned that these developments would lead to further grave situations for Turkey.

CUMHURIYET: The daily claimed that the PKK was aiming to provoke and push people into a course of action such as "intifada." By means of such an intifada, the PKK was aiming to confront people with the security forces to finally achieve the goal of liberating Abdullah Ocalan. The terrorist organization is reportedly encouraging people to embrace and take possession of the dead terrorists only to create an image that people were actually embracing the PKK/Kongra-Gel.

CUMHURIYET: Report of the administrative investigation started against Ferhat Sarikaya, Van Prosecutor who prepared the Semdinli indictment, still has not been sent to the Higher Council of Judges and Prosecutors. The report would be discussed at today's meeting if the council received it today (see press summary 03/27).

CUMHURIYET / RADIKAL / SABAH / YENI SAFAK: Delegation comprised of members of Turkish parliamentary commission probing Semdinli case conducted studies today at Hakkari's Yuksekova district. Chairperson of the delegation, Musa Sivacioglu, dismissed allegations that delegation had to see officers Ali Kaya and Ozcan Ildeniz at Van's Court Hall when the delegation was not allowed to the military jail where officers were held under arrest. Radikal daily claims that military circles have kept a cold stance and attitude against commission members during the recent trip of the commission to the region, and commission members were allegedly disturbed because of the intense security measures implemented. One of the commission members allegedly complained that they were even escorted by police officers as they were going to the bathroom. Commission members recorded and videotaped all the meetings made with people at the Yuksekova Subgovernor's Office. People in Yuksekova reportedly told commission members that authorities should penalize perpetrators of the incidents instead of accusing the prosecutor (Ferhat Sarikaya), noted Yeni Safak daily.

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